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City of Gainesville Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis

TOPIC: Neighborhood Bills of Rights
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REQUESTED BY: City Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Duval Neighborhood Association has proposed the concept of a “Neighborhood Bill of Rights” because of concerns about communication practices between government entities and neighborhoods. Modeled off a process used in Jacksonville, the Neighborhood Bill of Rights has **three main components:**

- 1) Neighborhood associations have a **right to consistent customer service** from city government,
- 2) Neighborhood associations have a **right to timely notification** about projects (i.e. development, roadwork, etc) that may disrupt the community, and
- 3) Neighborhood associations have a **right to access a grant program** for neighborhood improvement and programming.

Like many concepts that might appear simple and straightforward on their faces, there is more complexity to this proposal than meets the eye. As explained in detail below, the following steps must be completed before successful implementation of a Neighborhood Bill of Rights:

- 1) **Create a system to formally register neighborhood associations.**
 - a. Determine the definition of a neighborhood/neighborhood association that is eligible to register.
 - b. Identify a department to own this process.
 - c. Determine a method for collecting and maintaining neighborhood information.
 - d. Consider additional benefits besides the Neighborhood Bill of Rights that could be provided to the registered neighborhoods.
- 2) **Determine which rights to consistent customer service will be implemented.**
 - a. Consider how these rights will be formalized (e.g. in code or in City policy).

- b. Choose reasonable and realistic expectations that City staff can uphold in their operations.
- c. Decide how these new procedures will be communicated to staff.
- 3) **Determine which City actions/proposals warrant notification to neighborhoods.**
 - a. Create a notification system that can cross departments.
 - b. Create a system to track actions/proposals requiring notification.
 - c. Create a workflow to ensure messages are sent timely to appropriate parties.
 - d. Create a method that would ensure the neighborhood contact distributes the notification.
- 4) **Determine the parameters for a grant program, where in City Government it will function, and sources of funding. These parameters include:**
 - a. Type of program (reimbursement v. disbursement, matching, etc.)
 - b. Organizations eligible for funding
 - c. Projects eligible for grant funding
 - d. Source of funding
 - e. Amount of individual grants

HISTORY/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Greater Duval Neighborhood Association’s Proposal

The proposal before the Commission (attached) aims to improve the relationship between city personnel and “the City’s numerous organized neighborhood associations and groups: by requiring all city administrative departments to:

- 1) Provide “prompt, courteous, informed responses to all questions regarding City business. Replies, if only to report that inquiries or research are underway and a full response will be forthcoming at a later time, should be made within one working day of the original neighborhood contact.”
- 2) Provide “advance notification of any City-related public works or utility project taking place within or adjacent to a neighborhood (e.g. road paving; water, sewer or drainage work; traffic signal installation or removal; park renovation or substantial maintenance; land purchases, etc.), including the day(s) and probable length of any street closures, utility interruptions, or other adverse impacts on the neighborhood, and the name and phone number of the City representative most knowledgeable and able to immediately answer questions during the course of the work.”
- 3) Provide “notification of the submission of any application for rezoning, zoning or land use variance or exception, Development of Regional Impact (DRI) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) application, or other significant land use action; a clear explanation of the date, time and place of all applicable public hearings and other opportunities for public input on the application; and a clear explanation of the type of testimony that is allowable and relevant from neighborhood organizations and residents.”
- 4) Provide an “opportunity for formal input into the annual budget process, including the opportunity to express preferred City government priorities, suggested capital improvement

projects, and other statements that fairly represent the opinion of a majority of the neighborhood's residents.”

- 5) Provide “a timely personal response from its district commissioner or that commissioner's aide to questions directed to the City Commission office.”

The proposal also creates a mechanism for funding of resident-led programming by “official organized community groups,” defined as those which are “organized for at least one (1) year; meet regularly with at least 3 members present; present a shared ‘mission” or “vision” statement for the group; provide a program description that includes 1. Program purpose 2. Who the program will serve 3. How the program will operate 4. Who will operate the program 5. Desired program outcomes and program budgets; carry liability insurance separate from the City of Gainesville.” The organization must also “have a current Tax Exempt (501c3) or list a Tax Exempt (501c3) organization as a fiscal sponsor.”

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The City of Gainesville presently maintains an informal list of 69 neighborhood organizations.¹ These are used for general notification purposes but is not necessarily up-to-date at any given time. When certain land use projects are in their planning phases, either the developer or the Department of Doing is tasked with notifying nearby residents and, at times, holding community information sessions. The Department of Public Works also provides a weekly update via press release of all pending road projects expected to impact traffic. The city’s Communications Department distributes this notice using its networks.

State of Florida

While the State of Florida does not define neighborhood associations, it does define and regulate homeowner associations in Chapter 720 of Florida Statutes. Along with this, the State of Florida does not have any specifics about a Neighborhood Bill of Rights. However, it does detail the importance of public participation in the comprehensive planning process in FLA. STAT. §163.3181. It requires public notice of public hearings, which are required for land development planning according to FLA. STAT. §163.3225. This is related to the Neighborhood Bill of Right’s guarantee for notification about land use projects. Nevertheless, the State of Florida does not regulate specifics for neighborhoods and their relations with local governments.

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

There are few existing jurisdictions in Florida that have adopted Bills of Rights or other mechanisms that provide the same guarantees. The **City of Jacksonville** has numerous organized neighborhood groups that give residents a sense of identity and a place to express opinions and concerns. The City decided to take advantage of these organized neighborhoods as a way to facilitate communication between the City and its residents by adopting **Ordinance 95-247-106 Neighborhood Bill of Rights**

¹ http://www.cityofgainesville.org/Portals/0/plan/docs/GIS_Neighborhood_Associations.pdf

in 1995.² This ordinance created a formal policy statement that outlined a standard code of conduct for all city employees to uphold when interacting with organized neighborhood groups. It is administered by the Neighborhood Services Office in the Neighborhoods Department.

After hearing a presentation about the City of Jacksonville's Neighborhood Bill of Rights, **St. John's County** brainstormed a similar idea. The Board of County Commissioners recognized the importance of having informed citizens involved in government and the right of those citizens to interact with issues that may directly affect their quality of life. They also experienced inefficiencies with public hearings due to little dialogue between land use applicants, area residents, and other interested persons. In order to facilitate this informed and timely public participation in decision making, St. John's County adopted **Ordinance No. 2007-1 Neighborhood Association Bill of Rights**.³ It is administered by the Growth Management Department, who observed clearer lines of connection and a better reach to a larger group of people when it comes to notifying about projects. They refer to the Neighborhood Bill of Rights as an in-between process used before a project's public hearing that involves mainly contacting the neighborhoods through a mailing list. Over the years they have adjusted the process to decide when to use it and who is eligible for the process of notification.

The **City of Clearwater** had an ordinance adopting a Neighborhood Bill of Rights that was upheld by the Neighborhood Division in the Planning and Development Department. They found that the ordinance allowed for neighborhoods to have a stronger connection to the City and provided them with a platform that ensured their concerns were heard. However, the ordinance is currently being reconstructed because the City found that the language was outdated, not applicable, and not feasible to follow through on, specifically relating to the types of projects which require notification. So, the City is reworking the language to make sure the guarantees they provide for neighborhoods are able to be upheld and applicable to neighborhood associations.

We have identified that the consideration of a Neighborhood Bill of Rights involves the discussion of a neighborhood registration process as well as three types of rights (consistent customer service, rights to notification, and a right to a Neighborhood Grant Fund) that are listed in the proposal.

I. **Neighborhood Registration Process**

Neighborhood Bills of Rights focus on providing a connection between neighborhood groups and local governments. There is no consistent definition for what types of entities are most appropriately covered in the Neighborhood Bills of Rights. Groups that are provided these rights range from formalized entities, like homeowner associations, to informal neighborhood associations, which are voluntary organizations of residents who work together to improve and maintain the quality of life in a neighborhood, as well as more formalized entities like homeowner associations.⁴ Nevertheless, all jurisdictions with a Neighborhood Bill of Rights use a neighborhood registration process to enforce the provisions listed in the Rights.

² <https://www.coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/neighborhood-services-office>

³ <http://www.co.st-johns.fl.us/NBR/media/BillofRights.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.cabq.gov/planning/documents/DoYouKnowDifferenceNAHOA.pdf>

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Examples of Neighborhood Registration Systems:

Jurisdiction	Who can register?	Benefits of Registration	Registration process
City of Jacksonville, FL – Neighborhood Services Office in the Neighborhoods Department 295 Registered Neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any group including civic organizations, non-profits, businesses, private groups, or neighborhood associations (formal or informal) ○ No minimum size or boundary to be considered eligible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Neighborhood Bill of Rights ○ Notification about rezoning and land use amendments 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group fills out a form via online, mail, or in-person with information on: Boundaries; Contact information of person(s) designated to receive notifications; Contact information of at least two people that the city can contact for information.⁵ 2. After submitting – automatically registered 3. Only required to contact City if need to update information
St. John’s County, FL – Growth Management Department Unknown # of registered neighborhoods	Any formal or informal neighborhood association that is bounded by an area “characterized by a substantial commonality of interest and history of identification as a neighborhood separate from others” ⁶	Neighborhood Bill of Rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete an application online or in the County Administrator’s Office that includes the contact information for the agent that is designated to receive all notices 2. Contact the GIS Division to establish the boundary of the neighborhood association 3. Once approved – required to reregister during the month of October
City of El Paso, TX ⁷ – Neighborhood Services Division Unknown # of registered neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any <u>neighborhood association</u> that has: at least 15 members evenly distributed throughout boundary, which must be at least 4 square blocks, reasonable, representative, and consistent with the City’s Neighborhood Boundary Map; AND rules and regulations ○ Any <u>civic association</u> that has: 100 or more persons; and all the other requirements of neighborhood associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liaison to other departments ○ Notices of planning applications ○ Invitations to City events ○ In-kind secretarial services ○ Use of City facilities ○ A quarterly neighborhood newsletter ○ Eligibility for programs to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods ○ Access to neighborhood interactive maps 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit an application to the Neighborhood Services Division that includes: description of the geographic area and proposed boundary; contact information for two members designated to receive notices; copy of current by-laws or rules and regulations; names and addresses of the minimum number of members required 2. Once approved – they must: organize activities; hold at least one general membership meeting annually and notify city two weeks in advance; provide update of information within 30

⁵ <https://jaxneighborhoodorganization.coj.net/>

⁶ <http://www.co.st-johns.fl.us/NBR/media/BillofRights.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.elpasotexas.gov/~media/files/coep/community%20and%20human%20development/neighborhood%20association%20recognition%20ordinance.ashx?la=en>

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Jurisdiction	Who can register?	Benefits of Registration	Registration process
City of Raleigh, NC ⁸ - Community Engagement Division of Housing and Neighborhoods Department 260 Registered Neighborhoods	Any organization that ⁹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has defined geographic boundaries ○ Holds at least one meeting a year ○ Has officers and a contact person ○ Is non partisan ○ Is open to anyone who lives or owns property in the neighborhood ○ Has a constitution, bylaws or mission statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assistance with neighborhood events ○ Eligibility to apply for Neighborhood grants ○ Provide feedback on projects like road improvements, rezoning cases, site plans, and etc. ○ Access to city of Raleigh community specialists ○ Two mailings ○ Access to City facilities for up to four meetings per year ○ A link to Citizen Advisory Councils ○ Access to neighborhood maps 	<p>days; submit an annual report by no later than June 30th</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Register online or mail in an application to the Community Engagement Division that includes: 2 primary resident contacts and a map of the boundaries 2. Once registered - the organization will receive a Registered Raleigh Neighborhood Certificate and are expected to update their contact information if there are every any changes.

The above jurisdictions map out a variety of considerations when creating a neighborhood registration system:

#1: Should there be a formalized neighborhood registration process?

- A neighborhood registration is necessary to ensure the implementation of the specific provisions of the Rights.
- Most jurisdictions that engage neighborhoods have a formalized registration process.
- It also provides benefits for departments to engage with neighborhood groups.

#2: A formal definition of the organizations eligible for registration

- Options include defining organizations by their geographical boundaries, membership requirements (i.e. # of houses that are active members), the structure of their meetings and guidelines, or a combination of these.

#3: Identify a department to own this process

- In the studied jurisdictions, most housed this process in their Neighborhood Services Department, which does not exist in the same way in the City of Gainesville. Some housed the process in their planning department. Our Communications Department would also need to be involved.

#4: A method for maintaining the contact lists after registration

- Options include requiring annual renewals of registration, annual reports, or contact information for multiple representatives when registering.

⁸ <https://www.raleighnc.gov/community/content/CommServices/Articles/NeighborhoodAssociation.html>

⁹ <https://www.raleighnc.gov/community/content/CommServices/Articles/NeighborhoodAssociation.html>

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- City resources and staff time is usually required to keep lists updated.

#5: **Additional benefits for neighborhoods who register**

- Some jurisdictions offer additional benefits to neighborhoods that register, on top of those guaranteed with the Bill of Rights. They include neighborhood-focused newsletters, free/reduced fee use of facilities and resources, and online interactive neighborhood maps.

II. Rights to Consistent Customer Service

Some jurisdictions have formal customer service policies governing interactions between city/county personnel and the community:

Proposed Customer Service Rights	Currently (City of Gainesville)	City of Jacksonville, FL	St. John's County, FL	City of Clearwater, FL	Hillsborough County, FL	El Paso, TX
Prompt, courteous, informed responses to all questions regarding City business. At a minimum, requests must be acknowledged within one day.		✓ - 1 working day	✓ - 2 working days	✓ - Not specific, implies that response is timely		✓ - 10 working days
A timely personal response from its district commissioner or that commissioner's aide to questions directed to the City Commission office.		✓	✓	✓		
Opportunity for formal input into the annual budget process, including the opportunity to express preferred City government priorities, suggested capital improvement projects, and other statements that fairly represent the opinion of a majority of the neighborhood's residents.	✓ - All residents can provide input at all public meetings (workshops, General Policy Committee, City Commission).	✓	✓		✓	
The opportunity to participate in the design of publicly-funded projects within or adjacent to the neighborhood, including the opportunity early in the		✓	✓	✓ - Departments reach out to the neighborhood contacts and get feedback.	✓	

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planning process to express neighborhood preferences about choice of location, materials, orientation, size, land use intensity, and other features.				Communication methods: Metroquest, Clearwater Connect - similar to 311GNV, calling or emailing, or sending out surveys.	
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The above chart maps out the approaches taken toward customer service and citizen input by other jurisdictions. Considerations when creating a similar policy must include:

#1: The rights that the City of Gainesville wants to formalize using the ones above as a template

#2: The way these rights will be formalized (in code or in City policy procedures)

- The input process for neighborhood organizations to speak at meetings *may* affect the procedure for citizen participation if the right grants them to speak as an organized group.

#3: Choosing a reasonable and realistic time expectations for responses from City staff

#4: The way these new customer service procedures will be communicated to staff (i.e. trainings, formal statements, etc.)

III. Rights to Notification

The following rights guarantee that **registered** neighborhoods will receive notifications about specific types of projects occurring near their area. All jurisdictions send the notification to the person that is designated by the neighborhood association during the registration process, which means the **registration process is a vital component** to the implementation of these rights. These rights also involve adoption into land-development codes or department’s policies, which means they must be formalized beyond the Neighborhood Bill of Rights adoption.

1. Public Works Projects Notifications

- a. Proposed Right:** Advance notification of any City-related public works or utility project taking place within or adjacent to a neighborhood (e.g. road paving; water, sewer or drainage work; traffic signal installation or removal; park renovation or substantial maintenance; land purchases, etc.), including the day(s) and probable length of any street closures, utility interruptions, or other adverse impacts on the neighborhood, and the name and phone number of the City representative most knowledgeable and able to immediately answer questions during the course of the work.
- b. Currently:** The City of Gainesville’s Public Works Department provides notifications for some projects, depending on size, type, and scope:
 - 1. Neighborhood projects (i.e. resurfacing, etc.)** – All houses in that neighborhood get door hangars detailing the information about the project (projected timeline, contact information of supervisor of project, etc.)

2. *Major road project plan:* Often, notifications start about a year in advance. The department holds workshops for communities to understand and give input on the project. They also do mail outs to people that are within the vicinity of the project and post signs about the projects details. Community input is also given during commission meetings as the major road projects have to be brought before the commission at 30 percent and 90 percent completion.
3. Also, the Communications Department transmits press releases every Thursday with updates on public works projects. They also utilize other Communications tools to generally spread the word.
- c. **Other Jurisdictions:** Clearwater, Jacksonville, and St. John’s County guarantee this right in their Neighborhood Bill of Rights. In **Clearwater, FL**, the notification process involves the use of Nextdoor.com, the city’s website, and other news outlets. One issue Clearwater has found with this guarantee is that it is **hard to apply this notification process to small-scale projects (one-tile sidewalk replacements, etc.) because there are hundreds of those that happen each day.** This strained department resources and overburdened residents with projects they did not feel they needed to be notified about. Clearwater is now looking at the rewording of this section of the ordinance.

2. Land Use Project Notifications

- a. **Proposed Right:** Notification of the submission of any application for rezoning, zoning or land use variance or exception, Development of Regional Impact (DRI) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) application, or other significant land use action; a clear explanation of the date, time and place of all applicable public hearings and other opportunities for public input on the application; and a clear explanation of the type of testimony that is allowable and relevant from neighborhood organizations and residents.
- b. **Currently:** In the City of Gainesville, every applicant with a project requiring board approval must hold a **neighborhood workshop** as outlined in Section 30-3.7 of the Land Development Code.¹⁰ These neighborhood workshops are a way to provide residents a platform to voice their concerns about any projects that are being developed near their place of residence. The applicant must notify all property owners within **400 feet** of the project and all registered neighborhood associations within **one-half-mile** of the project via mailing notifications. The applicant obtains the neighborhood contact list from the Department of Doing, who often provides mailing labels to the applicant. There is no City facilitation of the workshop. However, after the workshop, the applicant must submit their project application that includes sign-in sheets and minutes of the application.

Along with the neighborhood workshop, applicants are required to notify residents within specified distances of the project about all public hearings and details for the project via a variety of communication methods. These are outlined in Section 30 – Land Development Code of the Code of Ordinances. It is important to note that **registered neighborhoods do not get separate notifications** as they did with neighborhood workshops.

¹⁰https://library.municode.com/fl/gainesville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH30LADECO_ARTIIHH_GU_DIV1REAU_S30-3.7NEWO

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c. **Other Jurisdictions:**

Jurisdictions (Section of the Code)	Types of Projects/Applications	Deadline for Notification of Public Hearing	Who gets notified	Other aspects of notification:
City of Jacksonville, FL (Section 656.130 ¹¹)	rezoning, zoning, Development of Regional Impact, Planned Unit Development, or other significant land use changes	at least 14 days before	Any registered neighborhoods within 350 feet	States notice received does not mean that the neighborhood association is automatically considered “affected party status”
St. John’s County, FL (Neighborhood Bill of Rights)	Special Use, Temporary Use, Variance, Vesting, Rezoning, Development of Regional Impact, Planned Unit Development, Planned Residential Development, Comprehensive Plan change, or other significant land use change	Within 10 business days of application submission	All registered neighborhood associations within 300 feet	Applicant or neighborhood association can schedule a meeting that is sponsored by the County where questions and concerns or suggestions can be heard; one or more representatives of each Neighborhood Association has an opportunity to formally share and address any concerns or questions as well as cross-examine the applicant’s witnesses during the quasi-judicial meetings
City of El Paso, TX (Neighborhood Registration Ordinance -No. 017744) ¹²	All land-use applications within a boundary	Within 10 days of the application submission	All registered neighborhoods within a reasonable boundary of the project	Requires notification be sent by the Planning Department
Hillsborough County, FL (Section 10.03.02 (f) ¹³)	Zoning applications that would affect a neighborhood (zoning requests, minor and major modifications to existing planned development zoning districts and special use permits, special use permit requests for activities, etc.)		All registered neighborhoods within a one-mile radius	

¹¹https://library.municode.com/fl/jacksonville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=ZOSE_CH656ZOCO_PT1GEPR_SP_CPRREAMZOCO_S656.130SPNONEORCPUMNEORCIORNEORPAPUHE

¹²https://www.elpasotexas.gov/~/_media/files/coep/community%20and%20human%20development/neighborhood%20association%20recognition%20ordinance.ashx?la=en

¹³https://library.municode.com/fl/hillsborough_county/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=ARTXAD_PT10.03.00PR_AMOFZOATRE_S10.03.02PARPR

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Jurisdictions (Section of the Code)	Types of Projects/Applications	Deadline for Notification of Public Hearing	Who gets notified	Other aspects of notification:
City of Clearwater, FL (Sec. 4-206 ¹⁴)	Building, zoning, or land use proposals	Within 10 days of the application submission	Registered neighborhoods within 200 feet	The City Clerk sends out notifications of public hearings
City of Raleigh, NC	N/A	N/A	N/A	No formal notification process – provides departments contact information for neighborhoods to give input on projects concerning land use changes

Considerations when creating a notification policy for both public works and land-use projects must include:

#1: Defining what types of projects require notification and how to handle projects that shift from their estimated timeframes

- Public works projects can range from small to large. They also work on timelines that are dependent on a lot of factors. So, this guarantee may be hard to enforce if it is not well defined or factors in the possibility of shifting timeframes.
- Land-use projects range from only zoning, only building projects, or all significant projects. The word “significant” might need to be defined more clearly to help applicants and the Planning Department know the applicability of this neighborhood notification requirement.

#2: The specifics about these notification processes (types of communication, deadlines for notification, eligibility of neighborhoods to be notified, and who is required to send out notices)

#3: The way these rights will be adopted

- Public works project notifications are usually written in department policy, but not the code.
- Land-Use project notification requirements may involve amending the Land Use Code. Also, there should be consideration on how the notification requirement will affect the neighborhood workshop requirement.

#4: How to ensure that the neighborhood contact relays the information deeper into the community

- Some jurisdictions require proof of notification receipt by the neighborhood contact in order to give the neighborhood the right to further input. Others have found it difficult to ensure this. However, they have also seen that a strong community presence at the public hearing meetings usually exhibits that the notification designee performed their job.

¹⁴https://library.municode.com/fl/clearwater/codes/community_development_code?nodeId=PTICODECO_ART4DEREO_TPR_DIV2GEPR_S4-206NOPUHE

#4: Create a workflow between the operational departments, like Public Works and Doing, and the office tasked with notifications and maintaining the registry

IV. Right to Neighborhood Grant Fund

1. **Proposed Right:** “Officially” organized community groups, neighborhood associations or homeowners associations will be considered for program consolidation and implementation into City programming. Officially organized groups should; be organized for at least one (1) year; meet regularly with at least 3 members present; present a shared ‘mission” or “vision” statement for the group; provide a program description that includes 1. Program purpose 2. Who the program will serve 3. How the program will operate 4. Who will operate the program 5.Desired program outcomes and program budgets; carry liability insurance separate from the City of Gainesville. All program volunteers will be subject to City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs’ security and application screening. To apply for or be considered for funding of resident led programming from the City of Gainesville or any other granting agency or foundation, an organization must have a current Tax Exempt (501c3) or list a Tax Exempt (501c3) organization as a fiscal sponsor

2. **Currently:** The City of Gainesville’s Neighborhood Action Plan Program and related grants process was discontinued during the last recession. When in practice, this program allowed neighborhoods to determine opportunities for improvement, both in their built environments and as a community. The program did encourage relationships and good communication between the city and residents but did have some drawbacks. There were, reportedly, some issues with distributing funds and ensuring that a project was truly reflective of the community’s wishes, and not just a few particularly active residents.

3. **Other Jurisdictions:** Note that neighborhood grants programs are not always related to Bills of Rights. So some jurisdictions exemplified below do not have a Neighborhood Bill of Rights.

Details	City of Jacksonville, FL: Neighborhood Matching Grant Program ¹⁵	City of Tacoma, WA: Neighborhood Innovative Grant Program ¹⁶	City of Raleigh, NC: Neighborhood Improvement Funds – Two Funding Levels ¹⁷
What can it be used for:	- An external, visible beautification or rehabilitation improvement (fencing, neighborhood identification signs, gardens, painting/landscaping) - <u>Cannot</u> be used for maintenance of past project	- Wide array of activities and projects including placemaking, blight removal, environmental stewardship, or community events - <u>Cannot</u> be used for staff time, ongoing programs/services, public works projects, or projects in the public right-of-way	- Any project that fits in the following categories: a. Neighborhood Organizing b. Physical Improvement c. Non-physical Improvement - <u>Cannot</u> be use for the continuation or duplication of the same project

¹⁵ <http://www.coj.net/departments/neighborhoods/neighborhoods-property-administration/neighborhood-matching-grants-program>

¹⁶

<https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/NeighborhoodCouncils/InnovativeGrant/2019/IG2019InnovativeGrantGuidelinesApplication.pdf>

¹⁷<https://www.raleighnc.gov/community/content/CommServices/Articles/NeighborhoodImprovementFunds.html>

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		- Examples: Latin Arts Saturday Market, Graphic Wraps on Pedestrian Cans/solar compactor, trail signs, community sing-a-long ¹⁸	- Examples: Lighting/Landscaping, Little Library, Plant Exchange Event, Halloween Party, Recycling Education Event
Amount:	REIMBURSED up to \$5000	REIMBURSED between \$500 - \$8,000	DISBURSED - Fund Level 1: up to \$250; <u>no matching</u> amount - Fund Level 2: \$251 - \$1000; <u>must match at least 50%</u> of the cost through volunteer labor, financial, or in-kind donations
Funding Source:	\$115,000 in the budget from the <u>Foreclosed Property Registry</u>	\$320,000 from the <u>General Fund</u> (used to be through gas and real estate taxes)	\$20,000 allocated in the budget
Who is eligible:	Any organization registered with the City of Jacksonville’s Directory of Neighborhood Organizations and in existence for at least 6 months	- Any Tacoma neighbors, or groups, of two or more – do <u>NOT</u> have to be registered - Have a fiscal sponsor	- Fund Level 1: Neighborhood-based organizations and groups of individuals and families; - Fund Level 2: Registered Neighborhoods ONLY
Other details/successes:	- Both 2017 and 2018: Had seven associations reapply - Current cycle: selected 22 of 23 applications - Most projects have done a good job at maintaining their projects.	- May 2017-May2018: 21 Projects Done - Priority given to first time applicants - Used to allocate 10% of funds for maintenance issues. Now, the City takes away any project that is blighted in the right-of-way.	- Most projects are sustainable and maintained as they require only a low amount of funding from the City. - All unspent funds are returned to the City.
Details	Hillsborough County, FL: <u>Neighborhood Mini Grant 19</u>	City of Orlando, FL: <u>Mayor’s Matching Grant20</u>	City of Boulder, CO: <u>Neighborhood Connection Grants21</u>
What can it be used for:	- Children’s programs, neighborhood identity programs, leadership training and development, start up fund for specific neighborhood projects, crime watch, publicity of special events, beautification, social events that bring neighbors together - <u>No capital improvement projects</u>	- Projects that address needs or improve the quality of life in the following categories: 1. Physical improvements 2. Public safety 3. Educational or Cultural Initiatives - Examples: Target Hardening, playgrounds, websites, up lighting projects, dog parks ²²	<u>Improvement Grants</u> : projects focused on place-making <u>Spark Grants</u> : Support events, skill-building programs, youth engagement <u>Block Party</u> : funds block parties - Examples: Common area enhancements with picnic tables and BBQs; doggie-waste stations; Welcome to the Neighborhood BBQ to help integrate CU students into their new home on The Hill; ChiliFest cook off ²³
Amount:	Up to \$5000	DISBURSED	

¹⁸ https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/NeighborhoodCouncils/InnovativeGrant/2019/2017IG_PastProjects.pdf

¹⁹ <https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/property-owners-and-renters/homeowners-and-neighborhoods/action-folder/apply-for-neighborhood-mini-grant> ;
<https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/library/hillsborough/media-center/documents/neighborhood-relations/neighborhood-grants/neighborhood-mini-grant-application.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.cityoforlando.net/oca/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2019/04/MMG-Guidelines-and-Eligibility-for-Neighborhood-Organizations.pdf>

²¹ <https://bouldercolorado.gov/neighborhood-services/neighborhood-grants>

²² <http://www.cityoforlando.net/oca/mayors-matching-grant-project-spotlight/>

²³ https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/NS_2018_grants_report-1-201901290918.pdf?_ga=2.51628969.1688712858.1568225293-1868853255.1567609943

City of Gainesville Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis
 Neighborhood Bill of Rights

		\$500 - \$5,000 – <u>must match</u> funds through cash, in-kind goods and services, and volunteer labor; bi-annual awards	REIMBURSED <u>Improvement Grants</u> : up to \$5,000 <u>Spark Grants</u> : up to \$2,500 <u>Block Party Fund</u> : up to \$500
Funding Source:		\$200,000 in the budget	Total allocation for all grants is \$50,000 through the <u>General Fund</u> Improvement: \$10,000 Spark: \$12,000 Block Party: \$8,000
Who is eligible:	Any registered Neighborhood or Civic Association, HOA, Crime Watch Program, Special taxing District	- Neighborhood Organizations that are registered - Be an organization for at least one year - Be a 501C - Projects that have a minimum of 7 volunteers	- Any HOAs, Neighborhood Associations, and groups of neighbors– do <u>NOT</u> have to be registered - Must have a fiscal sponsorship or be a 501c3
Other details/successes:	- Favors applications with matching funds or those who have other forms of leveraged support - Only one grant per qualified neighborhood association	- Can only receive the grant for 3 consecutive years - http://www.cityoforlando.net/oca/mayors-matching-grant-project-spotlight/ - Documents and Details some of the successful projects over the last few years	- Conducted outreach through email lists and the Community Newsletter and provided proposal support through trainings, as well as individual consultations with resident - Received a total of 55 grant applications in 2018. - In 2018, distributed 44 grants — four times as many as 2017 — providing resources to 38 different neighborhoods.

Considerations when creating a neighborhood grants program must include:

#1: The type of grants program to establish, where in City Government to establish this function, and how to administer the program.

- This includes determining whether it is a matching program or an additional source for neighborhood projects, the number of funding cycles per year, the application submission and review processes, and whether to operate on a reimbursement vs. disbursement system.

#2: The types of organizations eligible for funding.

- Options abound for how to structure these program (registered v. nonregistered and fiscal sponsor v. no sponsor).
- To incentive registration, the City of Raleigh offers separate funding levels for registered and unregistered neighborhoods.
- The City of Boulder has noted that fiscal sponsorship prevents many neighborhoods who are not as structurally organized from qualifying for funding, and these neighborhoods tend to be in areas that are under-resourced.

#3: The types of projects eligible for grant funding.

- Options include physical improvements, community programs or a combination of both. The City of Tacoma recommends that if it is only possible to have a small grant program, it should fund mainly programming projects.

#4: The source of funding for a grants program and the amount for individual grants.

- Grants programs examined in other jurisdictions allocate funds from taxes, specific funding sources from departmental fees, and the general fund. The City of Tacoma began their program with real estate and gas taxes. But when the limitations associated with these funding sources became clear, they shifted their funding to the general fund, which has allowed for more creative programs and projects.

PRELIMINARY COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS		
Proposal Ideas	Benefits	Costs
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds Community Resilience Provides for more informed communications between citizens and the City Strengthens relations between the City and the community Resolves potential conflicts Promotes community involvement and participation Opportunity for more community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires creating multiple polices both internal and for the community which involves time and resources Policies may take an adjustment period Rights may not be reasonable to expect with current department process Rights may not be applicable
Registration Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivizes neighborhoods to organize through guaranteed benefits Maintains current contact lists through formal process that can be used for multiple departmental uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not have many organized neighborhoods or neighborhoods that can afford being formalized so it may not be necessary No current department that official works on registration – would have to assign or create one Reregistration requires time from departments with little staff Benefits offered require work from department’s with few resources Resident education on the program and its benefits
Code of Conduct Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates formalized standards for the City to make it accessible and connected to residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City resources spent on educating and notifying staff of process Require period of adjustment
Project Notification Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs citizens of opportunities for participation in decision-making Streamlines process of connecting citizens with project managers as it emphasizes points of contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guarantees notifications about projects that may not be relevant to neighborhoods (too small) Some projects start earlier or later as it depends on resources, approval, and other factors affecting the project timeline

City of Gainesville Policy Program Preliminary Research & Analysis
 Neighborhood Bill of Rights

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allows citizens to shape the future of the area they live in and that affect their quality of life ○ Allows the City to keep track of the great events and achievements of the community and obtain interesting history on the neighborhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some citizens are reluctant to maintaining contact with the City and may not want to be notified about certain projects ○ Depends on the registration process to function correctly ○ Involves multiple collaboration between departments – communication issues possible ○ Hard to guarantee/enforce neighborhood designee distributes information
Grant Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supports neighborhood efforts to build community connections ○ Encourages community and projects that address issues of blight, equity, and inclusion ○ Gives under-resourced neighborhoods and areas access to resources to build connections and change their neighborhood for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must decide where funds for program come from and how much can be allocated which constrains what projects can be funded ○ Some projects or programs require permits and this may involve extra fees or issues ○ Improvement projects may be hard for neighborhoods to maintain if not consistently funded ○ Requires resources to meet, consult, and provide funds to neighborhoods ○ Reimbursement prevents under-resourced neighborhoods from participating ○ Disbursement involves stricter reporting requirements that might discourage neighborhoods from participating

PRELIMINARY AND ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS

NOTE: Bolded text indicates that those people outside of the City of Gainesville who have expressed an interest in contributing further to this conversation.

1. Carla Lewis Miles and the Greater Duval Neighborhood Association
2. City of Gainesville Government (including Dept. of Doing, Communications, Public Works)
3. Lisa Ransom, City of Jacksonville Neighborhood Services
4. Shaun Rycroft, City of Jacksonville Housing Property analyst
5. Shari Hart, City of Tacoma Department of Economic Development
6. Julie Tindall, City of Orlando Community Outreach
7. **Juliahna Green**, City of Clearwater Neighborhood Division
8. **Jonathan Edwards**, City of Raleigh Community Relations Analyst in the Community Engagement Division of Housing and Neighborhoods Department
9. Michael Roberson, Interim Director of the St. John’s County Growth Management Department



Draft1

2019 Neighborhood Bill of Rights Introduced to the City Commission by Greater Duval Neighborhood Association and is intended to serve all defined or undefined neighborhoods within the city limits of Gainesville, Florida in Alachua County US.

A proposal to create AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE'S "NEIGHBORHOOD BILL OF RIGHTS; DECLARING A CITY POLICY OF IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE "NEIGHBORHOOD BILL OF RIGHTS' AS THE REGULAR COURSE OF BUSINESS IN CITY GOVERNMENT; REQUESTING THE MAYOR'S OFFICE TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO ENSURE UNDERSTANDING OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE "NEIGHBORHOOD BILL OF RIGHTS" BY ALL CITY ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Gainesville's many and varied neighborhoods are the lifeblood of the community, providing most residents with their clearest sense of identity with and participation in the communal life of the City; and

WHEREAS, Gainesville has scores of organized neighborhood, civic and homeowners groups, all of which serve to connect residents with their geographic neighborhoods and with each other for purposes of self-identification, solidarity, community improvement, and the expression of communal opinions and preferences; and

WHEREAS, the City deals with the problems of individuals and neighborhoods on a daily basis through a variety of mechanisms, some directly targeted to neighborhoods but most directed to the public at large; and

WHEREAS, the City should take better advantage of the opportunity offered by its official neighborhood organizations to facilitate communications between the City and its residents and empower residents to create their own processes to be used in conjunction with City programming and services; and

WHEREAS, citizens and taxpayers should have the right to expect prompt, fair, courteous, and well informed treatment from the City at all times in their transactions and implementation of residential services and programs; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a formal policy statement regarding City interaction with neighborhood organizations will clearly set out the standard of conduct that should be upheld by all City employees and agencies in dealing with organized neighborhood groups and inform the public about the manner of treatment they should expect to be accorded; now therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Commission of the City of Gainesville:



Section 1. The City Commission hereby establishes the following "Neighborhood Bill of Rights" to govern the relationship between the personnel and agencies of City government and the City's numerous organized neighborhood associations and groups:

COMMENTS BELOW:

City of Gainesville's Consolidated Neighborhoods Bill of Rights covers every organized neighborhood association, homeowner association, community group, or official neighborhood representative in the City of Gainesville and entitles all entities fair and equal access to the following:

COMMENTS BELOW

* Prompt, courteous, informed responses to all questions regarding City business. Replies, if only to report that inquiries or research are underway and a full response will be forthcoming at a later time, should be made within one working day of the original neighborhood contact.

COMMENTS BELOW

* Advance notification of any City-related public works or utility project taking place within or adjacent to a neighborhood (e.g. road paving; water, sewer or drainage work; traffic signal installation or removal; park renovation or substantial maintenance; land purchases, etc.), including the day(s) and probable length of any street closures, utility interruptions, or other adverse impacts on the neighborhood, and the name and phone number of the City representative most knowledgeable and able to immediately answer questions during the course of the work.



COMMENTS BELOW

* Notification of the submission of any application for rezoning, zoning or land use variance or exception, Development of Regional Impact (DRI) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) application, or other significant land use action; a clear explanation of the date, time and place of all applicable public hearings and other opportunities for public input on the application; and a clear explanation of the type of testimony that is allowable and relevant from neighborhood organizations and residents.

COMMENTS BELOW

* Opportunity for formal input into the annual budget process, including the opportunity to express preferred City government priorities, suggested capital improvement projects, and other statements that fairly represent the opinion of a majority of the neighborhood's residents.

COMMENTS BELOW:

* A timely personal response from its district commissioner or that commissioner's aide to questions directed to the City Commission office.



COMMENTS BELOW

* The opportunity to participate in the design of publicly-funded projects within or adjacent to the neighborhood, including the opportunity early in the planning process to express neighborhood preferences about choice of location, materials, orientation, size, land use intensity, and other features.

COMMENTS BELOW

Section 2. All Consolidated Neighborhoods are entitled to the above rights by the City of Gainesville, however, only "officially" organized community groups, neighborhood associations or homeowners associations will be considered for program consolidation and implementation into City programming.

COMMENTS BELOW:

Officially organized groups should; be organized for at least one (1) year; meet regularly with at least 3 members present; present a shared 'mission" or "vision" statement for the group; provide a program description that includes 1. Program purpose 2. Who the program will serve 3. How the program will operate 4. Who will operate the program 5.Desired program outcomes and program budgets; carry liability insurance separate from the City of Gainesville.



All program volunteers will be subject to City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs' security and application screening.

To apply for or be considered for funding of resident led programming from the City of Gainesville or any other granting agency or foundation, an organization must have a current Tax Exempt (501c3) or list a Tax Exempt (501c3) organization as a fiscal sponsor.

COMMENT BELOW

Section 3. The Council hereby declares that the "Neighborhood Bill of Rights" shall constitute a part of the standard operating procedures of all City offices and agencies, and shall be observed to the greatest extent possible by all City officers, employees and agencies as the formal expression of the City's duty to serve the public effectively, responsively, and courteously through its relationships with citizens' formal neighborhood organization representatives.

COMMENT BELOW



Section 4. The Council hereby requests the Mayor or the City's designee to circulate a copy of the "Neighborhood Bill of Rights" to all City employees and officials and to take appropriate steps to see that the "Neighborhood Bill of Rights" is understood and complied with by all representatives of the City who deal with the public sector

COMMENT BELOW

4. This ordinance shall become effective upon signature by the Mayor, or upon becoming automatically effective without the Mayor's signature.

Adapted from Ordinance 95-247-106 from Jacksonville, Florida (3/29/95)